

Health, Social Care and Sport Committee – Wednesday, 20 January 2021

Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism

Memorandum on the Sport Draft Budget Proposals for 2021-22

1.0 Introduction

This paper provides information to the Committee regarding my spending plans for sport within my portfolio. The plans are set out in the draft Budget for 2021-22 published on 21 December. It also provides an update on specific areas of interest to the Committee.

The sector has faced significant challenges as a result of the pandemic this year but in the face of adversity, has worked collaboratively and cohesively to help people maintain their levels of wellbeing when the circumstances have allowed. Over the past ten months, we have aimed to strike a balance between the importance of sport and exercise to peoples' mental and physical wellbeing with the need to keep people safe and protect the NHS. We have also focused much of our attention on, and investment in, protecting the sector and helping it to prepare for the return of sport and exercise as the national rules are eased. For many people across Wales, sport and exercise has been a release from the challenges of their daily lives during the pandemic. For many others, they have been unable to find the time or opportunity to be physically active and as we recover from this public health crisis, it is vital we continue to support the sector to support people to maintain or improve their physical and mental wellbeing.

Although strides are being made with vaccines and we can dare to hope that there will be a return to some sort of normality for the sector in time, there remains a great deal of uncertainty and our plans will need to be flexible and be able to evolve within fast-moving circumstances. While recovery is key, we want to ensure we deliver on the Welsh Government's wider priorities such as climate change, reducing poverty and inequality, enhancing skills, and creating jobs.

Sport is an intrinsic part of our nation's identity. It brings our communities together and provides people with transferrable skills to enhance their learning and find a job or career. Through the many thousands of activities across Wales, sport also supports the growth of Welsh speaking communities by providing opportunities for people to use it on a daily basis as a living, modern language.

The sport sector must survive this crisis and we must plan so that our communities, clubs and facilities can return positively and look to the future with hope. We also

want to ensure that we can protect the sector and make it ready for any challenging implications of the EU exit but by the same token, assist it to make the most of the opportunities and positive challenges. It is important that sport is not exposed and has the tools it needs to navigate life post-pandemic and post-Brexit.

I am confident sport can support the nation to re-emerge positively from the challenging period we have been through. It is vital to enhance our sense of identity, physical and mental well-being, and to ensure the economic recovery of a sector that adds value to our health and happiness and gives meaning to all our lives.

The spending plans for sport will enable the Welsh Government to continue to invest, through its delivery partner, Sport Wales, in the people and places to provide inclusive and equal opportunities for people to lead healthy and active lives, and to realise their sporting potential.

The Culture and Sport Division, working with Sport Wales, will continue to support and promote the important contribution that sport, recreation and leisure make to Wales. Our actions and investments will foster a culture and environment in which sport is a major contributor to create a healthy and active population and one which identifies and nurtures sporting talent, wherever it is discovered in Wales, to its full potential.

The Culture and Sport Division will also continue to support the delivery of the Healthy Weight Healthy Wales Delivery Plan, the collaboration that is leading the delivery of the Healthy and Active Fund, and the Armed Forces Free Swimming Scheme across Wales.

2.0 Summary of Budget Changes

The Draft Budget 2021-22 provides a one year plan for both revenue and capital investment. Future budgets are not yet confirmed so indicative allocations for 2022-23 cannot be provided. The future provision for sport and physical activity will be considered in the context of the Welsh Government's priorities and available budget for the Mental Health, Wellbeing and the Welsh Language portfolio.

2.1 Resource

An overview of the resource budget changes between 2020-21 and 2021-22 is summarised in **Table 1** as follows:

TABLE 1: Overview of the Resource Budget					
Action: Sports and Physical Activity	2020-21 First Supp Budget £'000	2020-21 Second Supp Budget £'000	2020-21 Final Budget £'000	Change £'000	2021-22 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Sport Wales	22,567	35,067	22,567	(150)	22,417
Support for Sport	0	0	157	(157)	0
TOTAL RESOURCE	22,567	35,067	22,724	(307)	22,417
Sport Wales Pension Provision AME	0	0	0	2,000	2,000
TOTAL AME	0	0	0	2,000	2,000

In 2021-22 the Sport Wales grant in aid has been maintained and reflects the repayment of £150k for Invest to Save funding. In 2019-20, £450k was provided for the Voluntary Early Release Scheme repayable over three years commencing 2020-21. To note that the first repayment will be shown in the Third Supplementary Budget. The allocation also includes non-cash provision of £779k for depreciation.

In the First Supplementary Budget the Support for Sport budget of £157k was consolidated in the Support for Local Culture and Sport Budget Expenditure Line (BEL) to align the budgets delivering across the portfolio, whilst maintaining separate BELs for the sponsored bodies and partner organisations. In 2020-21 the Local Culture and Sport budget is £2.817m and is available to respond to delivery priorities for the sector. The 2021-22 plan includes provision for existing commitments such as for the Armed Forces Free Swimming Scheme, delivered by local authorities, and the Urban Games, which was due to be delivered in 2020 by the Urdd but was postponed due to Covid-19.

In the 2020-21 Second Supplementary there is an allocation for the <https://gov.wales/14m-funding-package-for-wales-sport-and-leisure-sector> to support the sector with the ongoing challenges of the coronavirus pandemic and to help provide longer-term sustainability. Of this £12.5m was allocated directly to Sport Wales and included in the funding of £35m to provide essential funding to sports clubs and organisations. The remaining £1.5m is managed within the Local Culture and Sport BEL for sporting events. This funding complements the Emergency Relief Fund and the Be Active Wales Fund. The sector has also been supported through the Welsh Government emergency funds for business rates and

the Local Authority Hardship Fund, which provided funds to offset the loss of income at leisure facilities.

Commercial income levels for the national sport centres are unlikely to recover to the levels before the pandemic. In the draft Budget there some targeted portfolio investments in line with the immediate Welsh Government priorities. Further financial decisions for the sport sector will assessed as we better understand the impact of the winter months on the spread of the disease. In 2020-21 there is additional provision for Sport Wales to cushion Covid impacts.

In 2021-22 Sport Wales as a sponsored body will be fully aligned to the Welsh Government accounts on a resource basis. The Annually Managed Expenditure budget of £2m will provide budget cover for any fluctuation in pension provision.

2.2 Capital

An overview of the capital budget changes between 2020-21 and 2021-22 is summarised in **Table 2** as follows:

TABLE 2: Overview of the Capital Budget					
Action: Sports and Physical Activity	2020-21 First Supp Budget £'000	2020-21 Second Supp Budget £'000	2020-21 Final Budget £'000	Change £'000	2021-22 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Sport Wales	3,345	3,345	3,345	3,284	6,629
Repayment of Sports Capital Loans Scheme	(254)	(254)	(227)	-	(227)
TOTAL	3,091	3,091	3,118	3,284	6,402

The 2021-22 Sport Wales capital budget of £6.629m includes £5m for the Strategic Sports Facilities Fund, where an additional allocation of £2m will further enable the increased participation in sport and outdoor activity. This is also important in ensuring that Wales is well positioned to compete internationally and to help host international events, providing a unique opportunity to promote Wales brand on the international stage in the future.

Sport Wales actively pursues policies and initiatives to reduce the impact of its operations on the environment. Additional capital funding of £1.3m in 2021-22 provides investment to address business critical maintenance, particularly the heating system and pool plant at the National Outdoor Centre for Wales at Plas Menai. Working with the Carbon Trust, this significant investment will deliver long term energy efficiency savings and significantly reduce the carbon footprint. The centre provides residential outdoor activities for schools in north Wales and across

the border in England, and contributes economically to the local area by providing full-time and seasonal jobs.

The budget change of £3.284m reflects the additional allocations of £3.3m as offset by the repayment of £0.016m for the yacht at Plas Menai, purchased with the assistance of Invest to Save funding.

The 2021-22 budget also accounts for a reduction of £27k in year for the repayment of Sports Capital Loans Scheme. The Sports Capital Loans Scheme is funded with financial transactions capital which is repayable to Treasury. The total loans of £1,828,362 in respect of three loans made to local authorities under the scheme are fully repayable over a period of seven years (repayments started in 2018-19). The amount of £910,236 remains outstanding.

3.0 Response to Specific Information Requested by the Committee

What impact Covid-19 has had on the provision of and participation in sport and physical activity and the priorities and allocations to address any impact.

The inequalities of sporting activity during the initial lockdown period was shown clearly by the [ComRes study](#) which Sport Wales commissioned in May. During the strict lockdown period, people from lower socio-economic backgrounds were much more likely to have reported a drop in their physical activity levels. Most worryingly, people who reported their children were not doing any physical activity or exercise on a typical day was 9% but this rose to 14% for children from lower socio-economic backgrounds. It is therefore more important than ever to ensure that children are receiving both high quality and quantity of sport and activity, particularly in a school setting, as a healthier population who are active are likely to be less impacted by future outbreaks.

There is an opportunity to reimagine what a future sporting nation could be. The compelling nature of sport, and Sport Wales as its lead organisation, is uniquely placed to support this new approach. With the ability to engage every community in Wales, across every portfolio, sport can emerge as the driver for a more resilient, healthier, and prosperous country. What is more, sport can do this whilst relentlessly focussing on tackling inequalities as a universally accessible and engaging policy tool. Investing in sport today, will not only be the vehicle which addresses these lost months, but will build a stronger, more resilient Wales in future.

The funding allocated to Sport Wales, and progress made in monitoring effectiveness of Sport Wales' use of funding.

Total funding allocated to Sport Wales in 2021-22 is shown in Tables 1 and 2 above. We are providing revenue funding for sport of £22.417m, highlighting our commitment to increasing physical activity levels and the importance of preventing ill health. Sport and physical exercise is part of the solution in responding to the immediate and longer-term threats of Covid on our communities.

We are also maintaining our commitment to support the modernisation and accessibility of sports facilities in communities across Wales by providing Sport Wales with a capital budget of £6.629m. The capital budget includes £1.645m for essential maintenance at Sport Wales' two national centres and to support its drive to improve their energy efficiency and reduce their carbon footprint. 'A Place for Sport' fund helps sports clubs and organisations in Wales improve and upgrade their facilities. The £5m available in 2021-22 complements the £8m we have already invested in sports facilities over the last two years. Environmental sustainability is integral to the budget decisions and the impact in reducing carbon emissions and energy efficiencies is a key consideration for investment.

Monitoring of the effectiveness of Sport Wales' use of funding is undertaken at a range of levels. My officials have regular discussions with Sport Wales on the strategic priorities articulated through its business plan and hold quarterly monitoring meetings to discuss progress against agreed objectives and outcomes. They also attend Sport Wales' Board meetings. I meet with the Sport Wales Chair and Chief Executive on a frequent basis to discuss policy priorities and progress against delivery of the remit letter and business plan.

The Welsh Government's priorities for sport and physical activity for the next three years, and allocations/projected spend for delivery of these.

The priorities for sport and physical activity are presented in Sport Wales' remit letter and articulated in the form of actions and outcomes in Sport Wales' business plan. For 2021-22, they are to continue to lead the sector and collaborate with others to encourage and facilitate a population increase in physical activity and to invest effort and resources where it is needed most, where there are significant variations in participation and where there is a lack of opportunity or aspiration to be active. Sport Wales will also continue to support the development of community sport across Wales and help sport to nurture, develop and support sporting talent to deliver success that inspires people and reinforces our identity as a sporting nation. It is likely Sport will continue to absorb the impact of the coronavirus in the first quarter of the financial year. Providing stability, reassurance and confidence to the sector will be a key priority for Sport Wales and through their strategy and person-centred approach, they invest approximately £16m per annum in community sport; through

partners, grant schemes and initiatives to ensure everyone has the opportunity to be active through sport. The revenue investment in 2021-22 will be complemented by a capital investment of £5m in facilities that will inspire and enable that to happen.

What evidence has driven the Welsh Government's setting of priorities and proposed budget for sport and physical activity.

Evidence has been drawn from the [National Survey for Wales](#), the [School Sports Survey](#), and the research Sport Wales commissioned from [Savanta Com Res](#) on the impact of the coronavirus on physical activity levels.. The priorities and proposed budget has also been informed by evaluations of existing initiatives, such as Free Swimming and the commitments in the Welsh Government's strategy to prevent and reduce obesity rates across [Wales, Healthy Weight Healthy Wales](#).

The number of people participating in a sporting activity three times a week or more is a national indicator for the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015. From the National Survey for Wales, we know in 2019-20, just prior to Coronavirus, 32% of adults (16+) participated in a sporting activity three times a week or more (808,000 people). 7% participated approximately twice a week (186,000 people), 11% participated approximately once a week (268,000 people) and 50% participated less than once a week (1,245,000 people). Moreover, 41% of adults had not participated in any sporting activity (1,040,000 people) in the previous 4 weeks.

The National Survey for Wales also reports that 49% of all adults would like to do more sport or physical activity (1,236,000 people). The equivalent measure was 50% in 2018-19, 55% in 2017-18, and 58% in 2016-17. This indicates that there has been a short-term decline in demand to do more sport.

The 2018 School Sport Survey from tells us that 48% of pupils in Years 3-11 participate in extracurricular or community sport three or more times per week. This is an unchanged since 2015. Similar proportions of primary and secondary pupils participate in extracurricular or community sport three or more times per week – 47% of primary pupils in Years 3-6 and 48% of secondary pupils in Years 7-11. There remains a gender difference in participation levels, with 50% of boys and 46% of girls participating in extracurricular or community sport at least three times per week. Participation levels also vary according to pupils' age, ethnicity, disability and relative level of deprivation.

Research commissioned by Sport Wales on the impact of coronavirus on sports participation has revealed that overall, levels of adult physical activity appear to be similar to those before the first COVID-19 restrictions were first introduced in March. However, the pandemic appears to have widened inequalities in participation across gender, socio-economic status, long standing illness or conditions, and age. While there was evidence to suggest a polarisation of activity during the national lockdown

(with increases in the number of people doing 'no physical activity' and physical activity 'every day'), the current survey suggests a reversal of this trend with more adults now doing 'some' activity. The feedback suggests that children in Wales are now doing more sport/physical activity outside of school than before COVID-19 restrictions were first introduced. The exception here is for adults from lower socioeconomic backgrounds who are more likely to say that their child/children are now doing less activity on a typical weekend day.

The ComRes research also reports that two thirds of adults in Wales agree that it is important to exercise regularly. There has been a slight increase in the proportion of adults exercising to help manage their physical and mental health over the past five months but fewer people report missing the types of activity that they were able to do before COVID-19 restrictions were first introduced (from 56% during national lockdown to 49% currently).

Evidence of how the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 and five ways of working have influenced the budget allocations for sport and physical activity.

Our work and the work of Sport Wales contributes to many of the Wellbeing goals but primarily those of creating A Healthier Wales and a Wales of Vibrant Culture and a Thriving Welsh Language. The benefits to our mental and physical health of healthy and active lifestyles are clear. By increasing our levels of activity and adopting other good lifestyle behaviours, we can all not only reduce our risk of cancer and cardiovascular disease but also improve our mental well-being and reduce the risk of developing dementia. Regular physical activity is proven to help prevent and treat non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and breast and colon cancer. It also helps to prevent hypertension, overweight and obesity and can improve mental health, quality of life and well-being.

Physical activity can and should be integrated into the settings in which people live, work and play. Sport and active recreation can help promote physical activity for people of all ages and abilities. Active play and recreation are important for early childhood as well as for healthy growth and development in children and adolescents. Quality physical education and supportive school environments can provide physical and health literacy for long-lasting healthy, active lifestyles. It is also important that adults can be physically active and less sedentary at work. Whether working or not, older adults can benefit from regular physical activity to maintain physical, mental and social health and enable healthy ageing.

Adopting and maintaining healthy behaviours is challenging and is strongly influenced by our environment, our social networks, the influence of social and cultural norms and wider commercial interests. Increasingly, we recognise the value of enabling communities to build positively on existing assets to find their own solutions to problems rather than prescribing action from outside. Creating

connections within and between communities to enable change can often be facilitated by access to relatively small amounts of funding, expertise or the willingness to share physical and human assets and resources. Across all settings, there are opportunities for digital innovations to promote and support people of all ages to be more active and to use data to help promote, support and monitor physical activity.

We must continue to find ways of creating the conditions which support communities and individuals in making lifestyle changes and sustaining those improvements. Sport can play an important role in creating a healthier Wales, and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language, through its network of partners and stakeholders, its community sports clubs and volunteers, including the Young Ambassadors who represent the interests and aspirations of current and future generations of young people. Sport Wales funding will be invested in our communities, through collaborating with other sectors, and integrating objectives and budgets, will deliver a social and economic return that will help create opportunities for, and a culture of, healthy and active lifestyles and a positive platform for young people to be positive and confidence about the future.

The capital investment in the National Centres and the Strategic Sports Facilities Fund will further develop sport facilities across Wales. This investment will not only support the vision of an active nation but also support the needs of our local communities, thereby creating a more resilient, sustainable sport sector for future generations.

The well-being outcomes and ways of working are embedded within all aspects of Sport Wales' responsibilities and activities including its strategy and business plan. In the development of the strategy for sport in Wales, Sport Wales involved and collaborated with a wide range of traditional and non-traditional stakeholders. Sport Wales continues to work with Public Health Wales and Natural Resources Wales to increase levels of physical activity across Wales and through the Healthy and Active Fund (HAF), collaborative working across communities is being encouraged and supported to achieve long-term sustainable benefits. The HAF embodies the sustainable development principle of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 and five ways of working, as evidenced by the independent process evaluation and a report by Audit Wales.

Evidence of how the Welsh Government's priorities and allocations for sport and physical activity contribute to the Welsh Government's equality objectives and ensure equality of access.

The Sport Wales strategy is driven by a person-centred approach to equality, diversity and inclusivity. The entire nature of the funding approach has been revamped to specifically drive action within the sector to proactively promote equality

of opportunity. Listening to the lived experiences of underrepresented minorities is a key feature of Sport Wales' future work. Of the 1200+ club funding applications Sport Wales received during the pandemic, 70% identified how their applications will promote equality. The percentage increased to 79% in the applications received for the 'Progress' strand within the Be Active Fund.

One of the key changes that Sport Wales has implemented recently is a revised investment strategy, which now focuses on three key areas - capability, accountability and data driven investment. This approach has refocused the way in which Sport Wales invests public money and lottery funding in its partner network, for both national governing bodies of sport and other national and regional partners. The revised criteria-based investment approach specifically targets the reach and impact that partners can have on different equality objectives. While all sports will be funded based on their participation rates and demand for their sport, there will be specific recognition of a partner's ability to impact on different demographics. Sports that can demonstrate reach and impact across gender, race and disability will receive greater investment levels as a way of driving action to support underrepresented groups. Deprivation is also a key criterion for how funding will be allocated across geographical partners, to proportionately fund those communities most in need.

Throughout the pandemic, the Welsh Government's funding has been directed towards projects which aim to ensure everyone has the opportunity to be active through sport. Through the Be Active Wales Fund (BAWF) and Sport and Leisure Resilience Fund (SRF) schemes, Sport Wales prioritised applications for investment that ensure sport is available to everyone.

How will the budget support:

- **increasing physical activity among children and young people in Wales;**
- **the wider preventative agenda; and**
- **joint working between sport, public health and other partners.**

Repurposing funding in 2020-21 has helped the sport sector survive through the pandemic and to prepare it to facilitate sporting opportunities and a positive impact on the physical and mental health of the nation. Prioritising young people will provide the biggest return on investment and the collaboration with the education sector is essential and the highest level of funding from Sport Wales' investment in national partners will be reserved for sports who can demonstrate the biggest impact on children and young people's participation levels.

As well as this shift in the partner investment, Sport Wales also invest in a number of organisations who exclusively support the physical activity and sport participation of young people. These include partnerships with the Urdd, Boys and Girls Clubs of

Wales and StreetGames, whose networks are supporting different and bespoke approaches to engagement with children and young people.

Sport Wales will continue to work with the education sector to have a positive and sustainable impact on young people's physical and mental wellbeing. The Sport Wales Young Ambassador programme, delivered in partnership with Youth Sport Trust, will remain a centrepiece of the organisation's investment in sport leadership within the school environment. Currently, there are almost 6,000 Young Ambassadors in schools, colleges and universities across Wales and 19,000 Young Ambassadors have taken part in the programme across its 10-year history. In a survey of Welsh Young Ambassadors, 96% of them said that the programme had given them more confidence, while 98% felt it had improved their leadership skills.

Sport Wales will build on the success of the [Young Ambassadors programme](#) to create a future workforce with skills developed through social engagement and volunteering. The programme not only supports the sector but it also enhances young people's experience of education and has a positive impact on their employability. With [recent data](#) showing that 30% of adults and 44% of 16-34 year olds seeking to volunteer in sport in the next 12 months, this is a workforce that is primed for growth.

Future investment will also continue to support physical literacy resources for schools and communities. Sport Wales has developed resources to support teachers and school staff in the primary phase and for extra-curricular sport in primary schools. Investment in 2020-21 will continue to support local authorities and schools to collect data on sports participation through the School Sport Survey. The data is key to understanding the experience children have of physical education and sport and helps shape the offer provided to them in school and in the local community.

Sport can be the nation's most effective preventative health tool but greater cross-sector prioritisation is needed to create the long-term sustainable shifts in participation. The Healthy and Active Fund and Healthy Weight: Healthy Wales Delivery Plan are two examples of success in this area.

Sport Wales continues to invest funding and resource in the delivery of the Welsh Government's '*Health Weight: Healthy Wales*' delivery plan. There are a range of areas of focus within this work including the continued investment in supporting the delivery of the Free-Swimming initiative and a new 60+ Active Leisure scheme which will be launched in January 2021.

In 2020-21, the Culture and Sport Division will continue its investment in, and support for the Healthy and Active Fund. The fund, which will enter its third year in 2021-22, supports organisations who actively promote and enable healthy activity for

population groups with little or no levels of physical activity in their lives. As is the case with many other similar programmes and projects, the impact of the coronavirus has forced the projects to curtail or pause their activities in 2020-21. They will hopefully resume in full when the coronavirus loses its grip and national rules are relaxed.

Sport Wales works across different sectors to broaden the health, social and economic impact of sport but the impact of the coronavirus has interrupted the momentum gained in recent years. The most significant piece of work has been the developing relationship between Sport Wales, Public Health Wales (PHW) and National Resources Wales (NRW) within the Welsh Physical Activity Partnership. The partnership will be revitalised in 2021-22 to continue its collaborative work on programmes, initiatives, research and impact assessments to support the Welsh Government's commitment to increase people's physical activity levels. This work will be complemented by the Welsh Institute of Physical Activity, Health and Sport (WIPAHS), a consortium of eight Welsh universities established by Sport Wales to provide a new, collaborative research resource to support evidence based physical activity interventions and progress evaluations.

In 2020-21, the most significant strategic investment Sport Wales will make will be in the Community Sport and Activity Programme (CSAP), which will transform the way local sport and physical opportunities are managed and delivered. CSAP will establish five regional sport partnerships across Wales by 2022-23 which will represent the interests of, and be represented by, a wide range of organisations, such as:

- Local Authorities
- Universities and/or Further Education Institutions
- Health Boards
- Housing Associations
- Leisure Facility Operators
- Sports clubs and other sports organisations
- Third sector partners
- Community Associations

This investment in CSAP will drive collaboration across geographical areas to deliver resources and change at scale. Sport North Wales will be the first partnership to go live in 2020-21, followed by the other four as soon as possible thereafter. CSAP will devolve responsibility for sport investment based on local circumstances and the needs of communities.

2020-21 Draft Budget - Committee Recommendations

Recommendation 13. We recommend that the Welsh Government should undertake and publish an evaluation of participation rates in the revised free swimming initiative within 12 months of its introduction.

Recommendation 14. We recommend that the Welsh Government should undertake and publish an evaluation of:

- **what additional activities have been provided with the £1.5 million that was previously allocated to the free swimming initiative;**
- **what the participation rates have been. This should be done within 12 months.**

It is important to remind the Committee that the change in approach to the Free Swimming initiative was designed not to increase participation across the targeted age groups but to achieve a social impact of supporting young people and in particular, those living in Wales' most deprived communities.

Like many other initiatives of its kind, the Free Swimming initiative has been challenged by the coronavirus and the necessary restrictions. For much of 2020, leisure centres and swimming pools have been closed or have had to operate at limited capacity to adhere to social/physical distancing measures. Consequently, local authorities have not been able to deliver the initiative as intended.

In light of the impact of the pandemic on the initiative, the participation data collection tool has been re-evaluated and will be issued to all local authority partners by the end of the calendar year. They will use the tool to collect quantitative data and case studies backdated to October 2019. The data and the independent evaluation of the new approach will be published in the autumn of 2021 when the full and real impact of the revised initiative.

The intention was to invest the funding released by the changes to the Free Swimming initiative to support the actions in the Welsh Government's Healthy Weight Healthy Wales Delivery Plan, which includes the £5.4m Healthy and Active Fund. However, all of the Sport Wales budget for 2020-21 was repurposed to help the sector survive the impact of the coronavirus. Those funds and the £14m Sport and Leisure Recovery Fund I announced in September will ensure we safeguard the bodies and organisations who deliver initiatives like Free Swimming and many other schemes and activities.